

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) Device [(1)] for palletizing objects, in particular empty plastic bottles [(2)] having a neck collar [(1)], comprising a transposing device [(4)] for forming layers [(5)] of the objects that are fed in rows, a pallet loader [(7)] transferring the layers to pallets [(6)], a conveyor zone [(7, 8)] situated between the transposing device [(4)] and the pallet loader for layers formed by the transposing device and a buffer [(9)] for intermediate storage of at least one layer, the transposing device [(4)] loads one of the conveyor zone [(8)] or the buffer [(9)] with objects [(2)] and the pallet loader [(7)] receives the layers of objects [(2)] from either the conveyor zone [(8)] or the buffer [(9)].

2. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, wherein the buffer [(9)] is arranged at least partially beside the conveyor zone [(8)].

3. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, wherein the buffer [(9)] is arranged at least partially beneath the conveyor zone [(8)].

4. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, wherein the buffer [(9)] has a reversible carriage [(10)] for receiving at least one layer [(5)] of objects [(2)].

5. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, wherein the buffer [(9)] has at least one endless conveyor chain for receiving at least one layer [(5)] of objects [(2)].

6. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, wherein the buffer [(9)] has at least one container that can be handled separately for a layer [(5)] of objects [(2)].

7. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, wherein the buffer [(9)] is provided with supports [(11)] for the objects [(2)].

8. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 7, wherein the supports [(11)] are adjustable for adaptation to different object diameters.

9. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, wherein the conveyor zone [(8)] has a sliding table [(12)] for a layer [(5)] of objects [(2)], the table being movable between the normal parking station of the transposing device [(4)] and the normal receiving station of the pallet loader [(7)].

10. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 9, wherein the buffer [(9)] is arranged beneath the sliding table [(12)] and passes by an additional parking station of the transposing device [(4)] as well as an additional receiving station of the pallet loader [(7)].

11. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 10, wherein the transposing device [(4)] and the pallet loader [(7)] one of execute an additional stroke during which they set down the objects on the buffer [(9)] or pick up the objects from the buffer [(9)].

12. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, and a distributor [(13)] connected upstream from the transposing device [(4)] continuously shapes several rows [(26 through 31)] of objects [(2)] from an incoming row of objects [(2)].

13. (Currently Amended) Device [(1)] for palletizing objects, especially empty plastic bottles [(2)] having a neck collar [(3)], comprising a transposing device [(4)] for forming layers [(5)] of the objects supplied in rows, a pallet loader [(7)] transferring the layers to pallets [(6)], a conveyor zone [(8)] arranged between the transposing device [(4)] and the pallet loader for the layers formed by the transposing device, and a distributor [(13)] which is provided upstream from the transposing device [(4)] continuously forms several outgoing rows [(26 through 31)] of objects [(2)] from an incoming row of objects [(2)].

14. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 13, wherein the distributor [(13)] has a continuously revolving conveyor chain [(18)] for a single-row feed of objects [(2)], a plurality of clamping star wheels [(20 through 25)] revolving in synchronization being connected one of directly or indirectly downstream from the conveyor chain, removing the objects [(2)] individually from the conveyor chain [(18)] and distributing them among multiple paths [(26 through 31)].

15. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 13, wherein the distributor [(13')] has multiple continuously revolving conveyor chains [(18, 18')] for a single row supply of objects [(2)], several clamping star wheels [(40 through 47)] being connected one of directly or indirectly downstream from each, individually removing the objects [(2)] from the conveyor chains [(18, 18')] and distributing them among multiple paths [(L1 through L8)].

16. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 15, wherein the conveyor chains [(18, 18')] form a tangent to the discharge star wheel [(17)] of a blow molding machine [(S)] and are loaded alternately with objects [(2)] by the controllable gripper arms [(G)] of the discharge star wheel.

17. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 14 , wherein each of the conveyor chains [(18, 18')] is equipped with individually controllable gripper tongs [(19')] for targeted gripping and release of one object [(2)] at a time.

18. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 14, wherein each of the conveyor chains [(18, 18')] has a curved path in the transfer area to the clamping star wheels [(40 through 47)].

19. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 14, and at least one clamping star wheel [(48 through 51)] that can be driven in synchronization is provided for one of at least one conveyor chain [(18, 18')] or at least one clamping star wheel [(43, 47)] for input of objects [(2)] from a storage device [(59)] into one of the conveyor chain [(18, 18')] or into the clamping star wheels.

20. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 15, and a transfer device [(50, 52)] for transferring objects [(2)] between one of the conveyor chains [(18, 18')] or the clamping star wheels assigned to them.